BALTIMORE AND OHIO RAILROAD,
CHICAGO TERMINAL RAILROAD,
SOUTH BRANCH OF THE CHICAGO RIVER BRIDGE
I&M Canal National Heritage Corridor
Spanning the South branch of the Chicago River
Chicago
Cook County
Illinois

HAER No. IL-67

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Engineering Record
National Park Service

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD

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Location:	I & M Canal National Heritage Corridor Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's Chicago Terminal Railroad, crossing the South Branch of the Chicago River, north of the St. Charles Airline Railroad's bridge, near the intersection of Clark and of West 16th streets Chicago, Cook County, Illinois UTM: 16 E.447360 N.4634300 Quad: Englewood
Date of Construction:	1930
Builder:	Unknown
Present Status:	Abandoned
Significance:	This bridge was built by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's Chicago Terminal bascule bridge, following the straightening of the South Branch of the Chicago River in 1930.
Project Information:	The Illinois and Michigan Canal was designated a National Heritage Corridor in 1984. The following year HABS/HAER embarked on an extensive inventory and documentation project of the 100 mile-long corridor. Field work for this project was concluded in 1988. Final editing of the documentation was completed in 1992.
Historians:	Frances Alexander and John Nicolay, 1986.

This bridge and the adjacent bascule span of the St. Charles Airline were built in 1930 as part of the river improvements of the South Branch of the Chicago River. The two spans were constructed by the American Bridge Company. Each had a counterweight and also shared a third counterweight situated between the two bascule bridges. The B & O bridge to the north and the span of the St. Charles Airline to the north each carried two tracks. (Jointly owned by the Illinois Central and the Chicago, Burlington, & Quincy, the St. Charles Airline controlled a small segment of trackage east of the Chicago River.)

The B & O bridge is a single-leaf, Strauss trunnion bascule bridge and measures 186'-0" long. It rests on concrete abutments. To the west is a steel plate-girder approach span as well as a concrete girder approach span. In 1931 the bascule spans of the St. Charles Airline and the B & O were raised 11'-6" as part of a track separation project initiated in the early 1930s by the B & O, the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy, and the Illinois Central. No longer in service, the B & O bridge is locked in an upright (open) position. The span of the St. Charles Railroad remains in operation.

SOURCES:

"Busiest Railway Crossing Is No More," Railway Age, v. 91 (August 15, 1931): 241-244, 251.

"Raise 3330-Ton Bascule Span 11-1/2 Ft.," Railway Age, v. 92 (January 9, 1932): 83-85.

C. H. Mottier, "A Complex Bridge-Moving Job," Railway Age, v. 90 (February 28,1931): 445-447.

"Excavating New Million-Yard Channel for the Chicago River," Engineering News-Record, v. 102 (May 2, 1929): 717-719.

"Straightening the Chicago River Involves Many Problems," Engineering News-Record, v. 97 (November 4, 1926): 745-747.